

**2014 Homeland Security Grant Application Teleconference  
Question and Answer Session  
Minutes**

**Wednesday, September 10, 2014 – 2:00 p.m.**

The call began at 2:04 p.m. 37 parties participated.

Notes from the call will be posted on the Grants Management website.

Pam Urban-Morin, Department of Safety, Grants Management Unit, hosted the call. Tom Andross from the Grafton County Sheriff's Office and Chief Gerry Lewis from the Windham Police Department were also assisting from the Homeland Security Grant Committee (Grant Committee).

Pam advised that this call is regarding the 2014 State Homeland Security Grant applications. Director Plummer was called away to another meeting and was unable to attend. Notes from this call will be posted on the Grants Management Unit webpage at the Department of Safety website.

This year, the grant process is similar to the previous year's application process. The Grants Management Unit website contains the application which is due on October 3, 2014 at noon. The application time period has been shortened to give more time for the completion of projects. This program is a main source of capability enhancement or capability building. There is a fairly large range in program options and this grant does not require a match. The grant for this year will have a little more money available than last year for local grants. The Law Enforcement side of the grant has just over \$1 million available and the non-Law Enforcement side has close to \$2 million available. The breakdown for awards is available on the Grants Management Unit website. Some funds have already been set aside for exercise and training needs and are available now. Contact Emily Martuscello at Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) for exercises or Captain Bob Pragoff at Fire Standards and Training & EMS for training, or Police Standards and Training for law enforcement specific training.

Key highlight: If the printed application looks quite large, it is due to grant terms and conditions that are included. The narrative needs to be filled out which can be backed up with information that supports the grant request such as after action reports, local emergency operation plans (LEOP), and other documents. You will receive more scoring points if those supporting documents are included with the application. The score sheet is included in the back of the application. It is good practice to include areas that score the largest amount of points on the application. If you go through the list and feel like your application is not scoring particularly high in certain areas, make sure you include specifics to back up the narrative.

Once applications come in to the Grants Management Unit, they are processed through eligibility requirements to align with federal eligibility requirements and then go out to the Grant

Committee. The Grant Committee will score the applications and then meet again to deliberate over the applications and the scores. The Grant Committee will make recommendations to the Department of Safety Commissioner who will then consult with the Governor's Office. The goal is to have grant award notifications out before the holiday season this year. The Grant Committee is trying to allow enough time to implement the programs. The environmental and historical impact review can slow down the process. The goal is to give enough time to allow that evaluation to occur. DHS is holding to the 24-month timeline for these grants. In previous years, we had grants open for several years. Congress has since pushed to move funds faster.

### **Question & Answers:**

**Question:** Jason Johnson, Milford Area Communications Center: Question regarding unauthorized expenditures, section 21 of the FAQ, the 2<sup>nd</sup> to last bullet. Does this apply to base stations?

**Answer:** Pam advised it does not. The restriction only applies to portable and mobile radios. Communication base stations are potentially considered for application.

**Question:** Jason Johnson inquired if the application has been posted?

**Answer:** Pam advised that it had been posted on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. It is under the 2014 grant announcement section on the website.

**Question:** Kevin LaChapelle, Franklin Fire Department: The local community center has other federal grants that are being expended at this point. Can we piggy back a grant through DOS on to federal grants that are being utilized for same building?

**Answer:** Pam replied that you can for specific eligible costs. There is a clear segregation of funds and funding streams. If it's an eligible project (check out the score list), we could endeavor to work on a project where there is another project going on.

**Question:** Tim Macklin, Somersworth Police Department: Under category 3 specialty teams and collaboration with school security, will hard security surveillance equipment fall under this?

**Answer:** Pam responded that it would. This is a new area this year. Previously, Homeland Security Grants didn't fund those projects. However, we revised the State Strategy to include school security. You need to have collaboration with the school, EMD, fire, etc. You can find more information on the school security planning on the HSEM webpage. You are encouraged to review the items.

**Question:** Tim Macklin inquired if the schools need to be included in the application?

**Answer:** Pam advised that the applicant has to be a first responder agency; however, the school can be listed as an associated party.

**Question:** Martin McMillan, Hanover Fire Department: Due to the hazards with the Connecticut River water rescues, we would be interested in expanding our program for swift

water rescues. We have private funding help from the school and would want to move up river and do more regional with Lebanon, etc. If we want to do the application with other communities, do you need official involvement from them?

**Answer:** Pam advised that formal written commitment from the regional partners is required if you will be applying for a regional grant. Lebanon received funding to do more swift water work last year and there was a large initiative statewide with swift water rescues. Make sure to talk with other programs to see if you can join together. Regional initiatives are encouraged with the grant.

**Question:** Kevin Walsh, Rockingham County Sheriff's Office: Is there a standard format for the required NIMS letter?

**Answer:** Pam advised that last year we found out that NIMSCAST was down and will not be revived. The federal government has not provided the State with any capability to meet this requirement; however, there are still compliance points to meet. For Homeland Security Grants, applicants will need to certify that they have met basic NIMS components for various requirements. There is an explanation in the FAQs for the application and a dedicated link for more info. A certification statement is required.

**Question:** Kevin Walsh inquired if THIRA is involved this year? It was a bit confusing last year.

**Answer:** Pam advised that the grant is less specific this year regarding THIRA. HSEM Field Reps will be working with locals to educate folks regarding THIRA and SPR. We have changed our approach with how to handle backup for THIRA as there is no local level requirement yet.

**Question:** Steve Brady, Bedford Fire Department: For continuation of previous regional projects, is there different scoring or how does that work? We started a regional communications project in the past. Is there any different requirement? Do you want original MOUs, etc?

**Answer:** Pam advised, yes. Whenever you are doing a regional application, you need to include specific agreements with partners. We will need MOUs and updated letters of commitment. Enhancing capability and building existing capabilities is something that Homeland Security is realizing they have invested a lot of money in nationally and maintenance is becoming expensive.

**Question:** Steve Brady asked if they are including new agencies in their regional application (with the short turnaround and with selectman only meeting sporadically), can a commitment from a chief officer work?

**Answer:** Pam advised, yes. It is ok to get a chief officer to sign the commitment and then state in the application that if the grant is awarded to you, you would obtain the next level of approval from the select board, etc. Information like that would help in scoring. In regards to letters of support, Tom Andross advised that the Grant Committee wants to caution applicants to ensure that MOU's are up to date and relevant to the project they are applying for.

**Question:** Martin McMillan, Hanover Fire Department: Are the grants awarded an all or nothing for funding or would awards be given for less than the amount requested?

**Answer:** Pam advised one thing that may help with applications and grants is if the project is presented in phases. The Grant Committee could then fund half or a portion of the request and be able to revisit the remaining phase in future years. There may be one part that Homeland Security can fund and potentially other grants could fund other portions. In the narrative, you could discuss the ability of making the project viable if you had to take a reduced grant. There was a large grant last year with questions about whether it was enough funding to make a viable project in the Homeland Security spectrum.

**Question:** Kevin LaChapelle, Franklin Fire Department: In reference to statewide capabilities regarding swift water rescue, it is still unclear if we should meet on statewide water rescue components to potentially duplicate larger portions. That way, in the end someone is win-win on funding and can increase statewide capabilities.

**Answer:** Pam responded that swift water rescue is a large investment and is staff intensive. There have been discussions of a whole state concept and making the whole state accessible to the right resources. Pam suggested discussing this further with Director Plummer offline.

**Statement:** Chief Gerry Lewis, Windham Police Department: Gerry applauded the regionalization initiative. It is always a struggle to give out as much money as possible to as many groups as possible. The Grant Committee prefers regionalization. There are great projects that get presented, but many of them only include one community. Regionalization on projects eliminates struggles to make sure everyone gets the resources they need. The Grant Committee encourages folks to find out what weaknesses are out there and tackle them as a region.

**Question:** Doug Hackett, Hanover: Does the submission need to occur in person or can it be submitted electronically? How does the Grant Committee prefer submission?

**Answer:** Pam advised the applications are due by noon on October 3<sup>rd</sup> in hard copy format. At this time the Grants Management Unit does not accept faxes or emails. Applications can be submitted via mail or in person. For the next round of applications in the spring/summer time frame, we are going to have an electronic application available. Applications are date stamped when they are received and it is noted if they are late.

**Question:** Mike Pearl, Concord Police Department: Are incident command style vehicles restricted in the grant?

**Answer:** Pam advised the Grant Committee had long discussions about allowable vehicles. Command-type vehicles are allowable as long as they are AEL eligible. The restriction is on CBRNE response type vehicles. Look at the score sheet in the back of the application for assistance. Pam advised that they can call the Grants Management Unit anytime if they have other questions. She will try to get back to them within a day.

**Question:** A question was asked by an unidentified caller of where to find a copy of the application.

**Answer:** Pam advised to go to the Department of Safety webpage. The link for 2014 Homeland Security Grants will take you to the Grants Management Unit webpage with all information.

**Question:** How long does it take to fill out the application?

**Answer:** Pam advised there is not a standard time to complete the application. Applicants need to provide some fairly detailed information which can take time to pull together. The score sheet in the back of the application lists the type of documents that will get higher points on the application.

**Question:** Kevin LaChapelle: What is the Grant Committee's feeling on generators for shelters, ACS, PODs, etc.?

**Answer:** Pam advised generators are not usually funded through the Homeland Security Grant. They are usually managed through the EMPG grant. Pam advised him to call her office tomorrow to discuss further specifics of the request and they can also talk with HSEM.

**Question:** Richard O'Brien, Goffstown Fire Department: We are looking for a program for EMS in warm zones during mass shootings and other law enforcement events. Would training for this be funded under the training program?

**Answer:** Pam advised this is a very hot topic right now and this would go under training and exercise money for those capabilities. She advised him to reach out to HSEM or FST&EMS. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and such would fall under AEL eligible equipment .

Pam stated that any further questions were to be directed to the Grants Management Unit at 271-7663. The Grants Management Unit is located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor at 33 Hazen Drive. There will be another call on September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

The call ended at 2:51 p.m.